DANIEL WARREN JOHNSON

MIKE SPICER

TRANSFORMERS

image

#03

ENERGON UNIVERSE

TRANSFORMERS

ISSUE THREE

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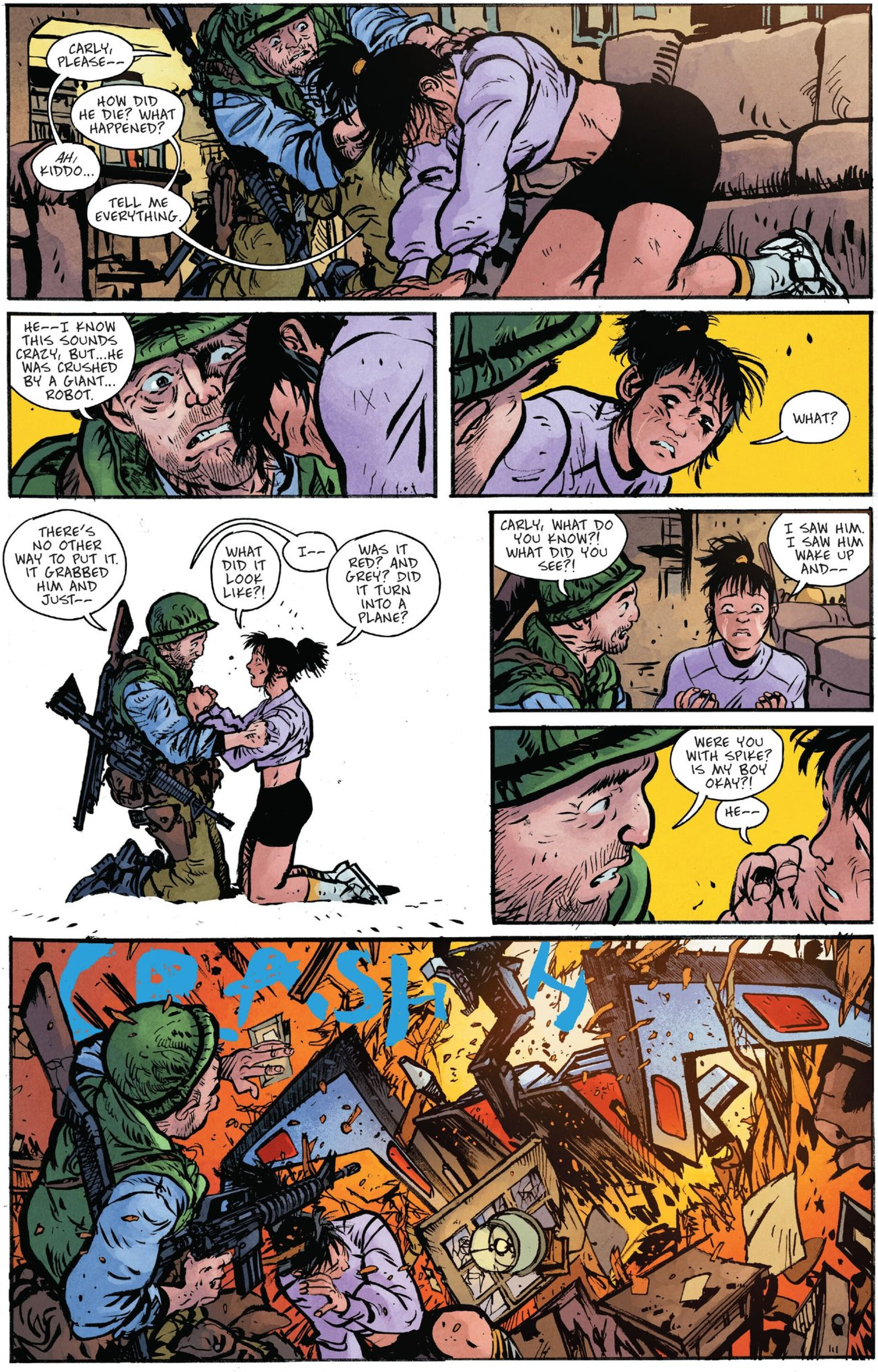
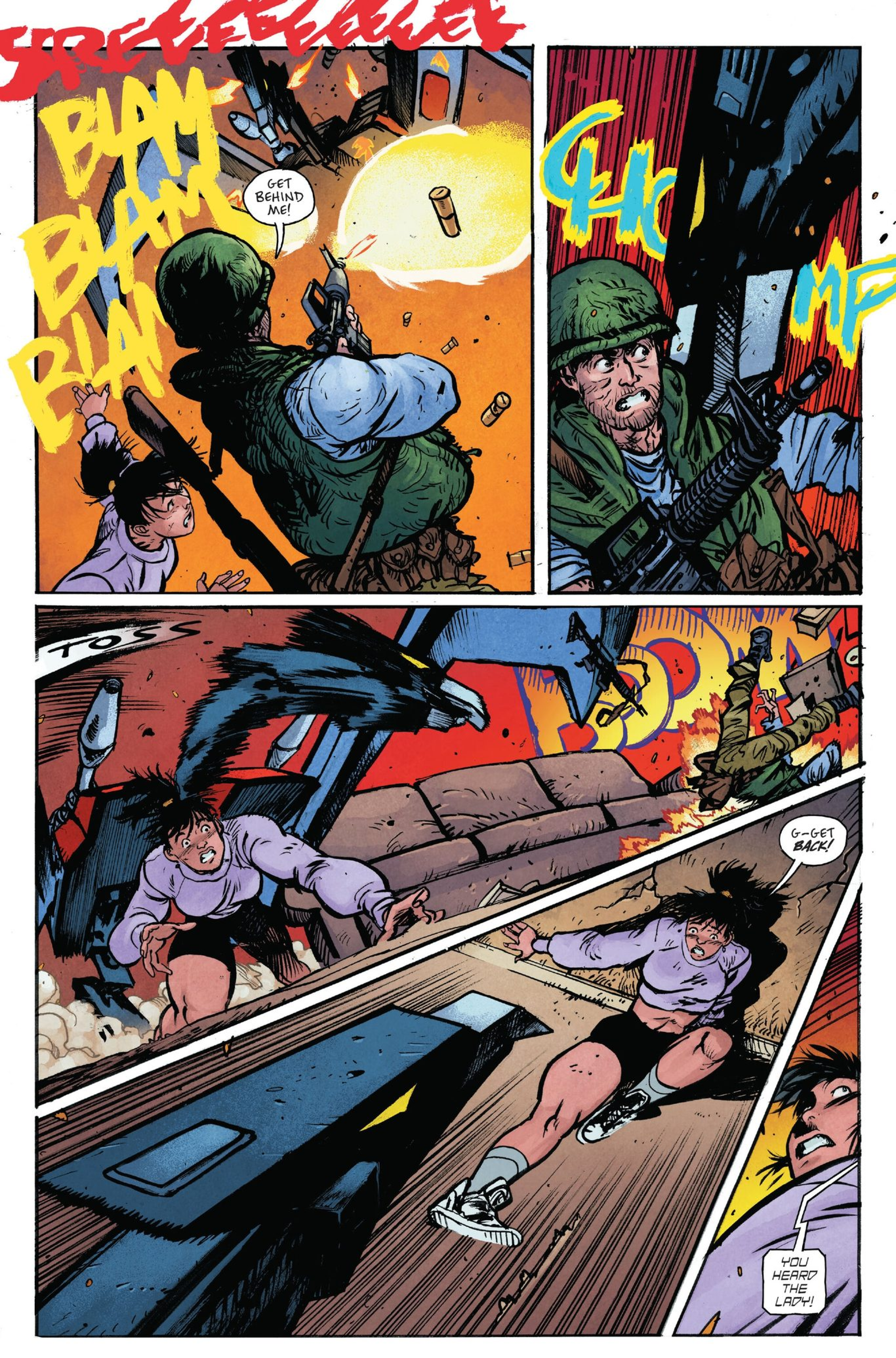
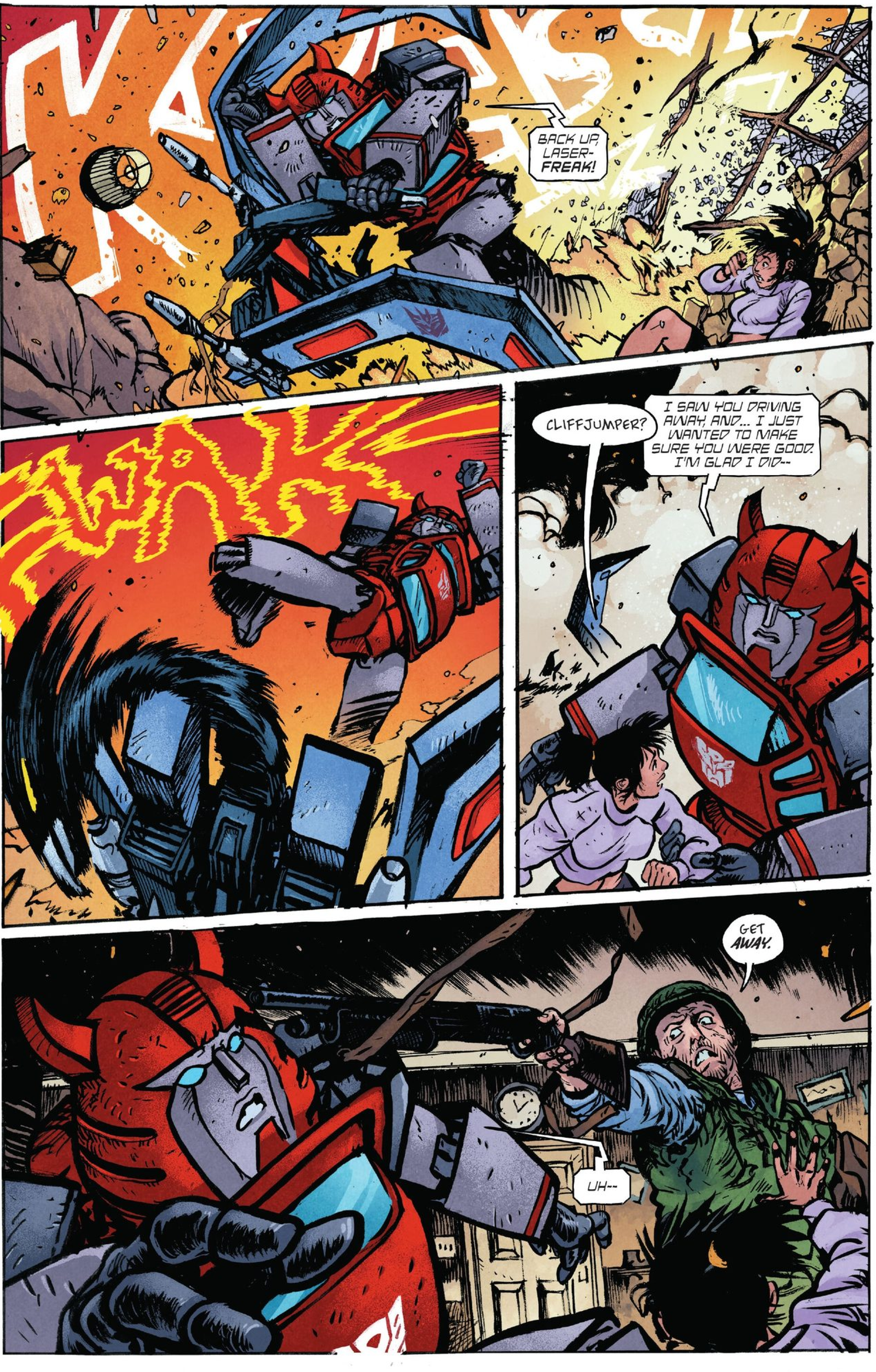
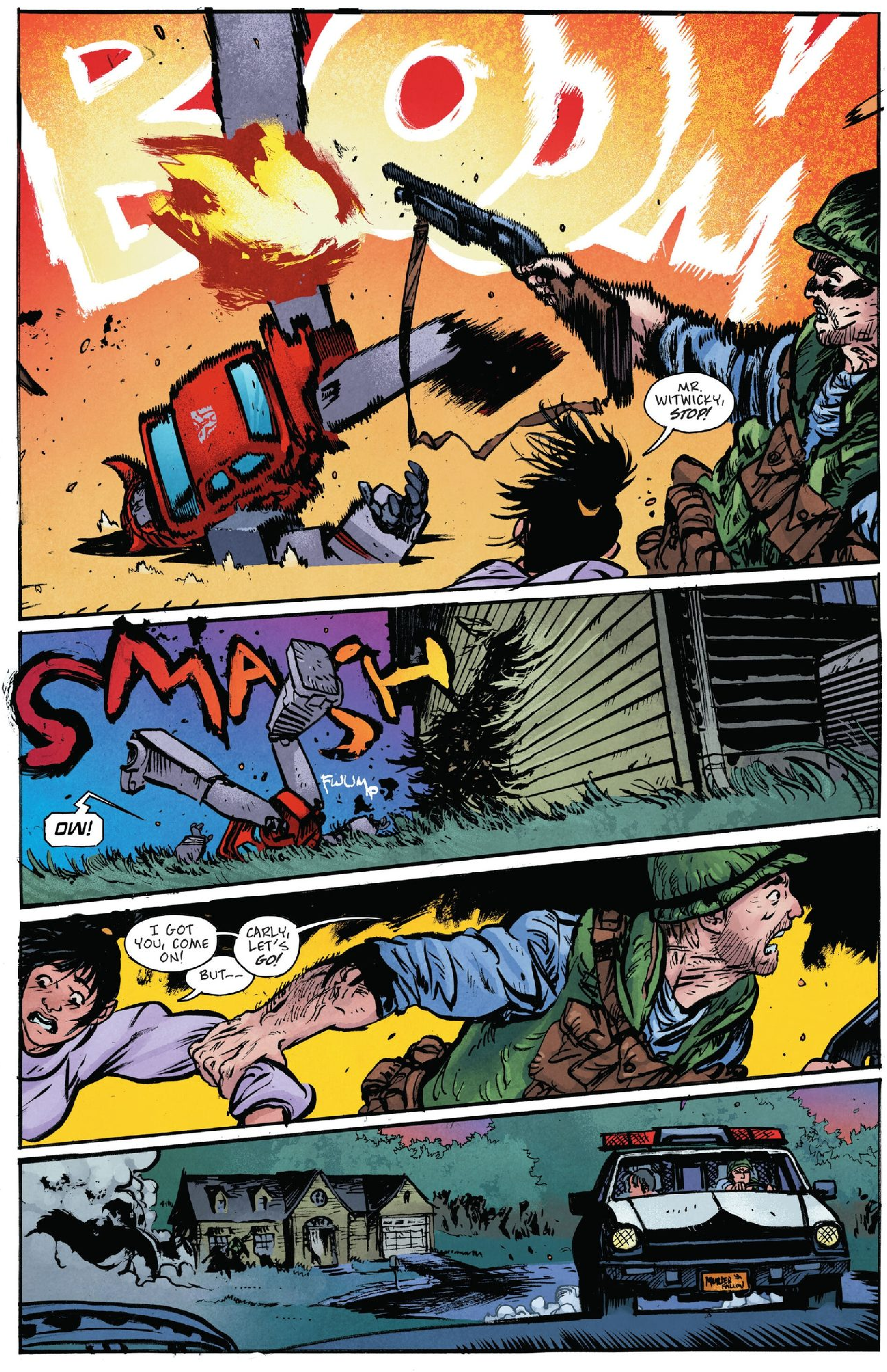
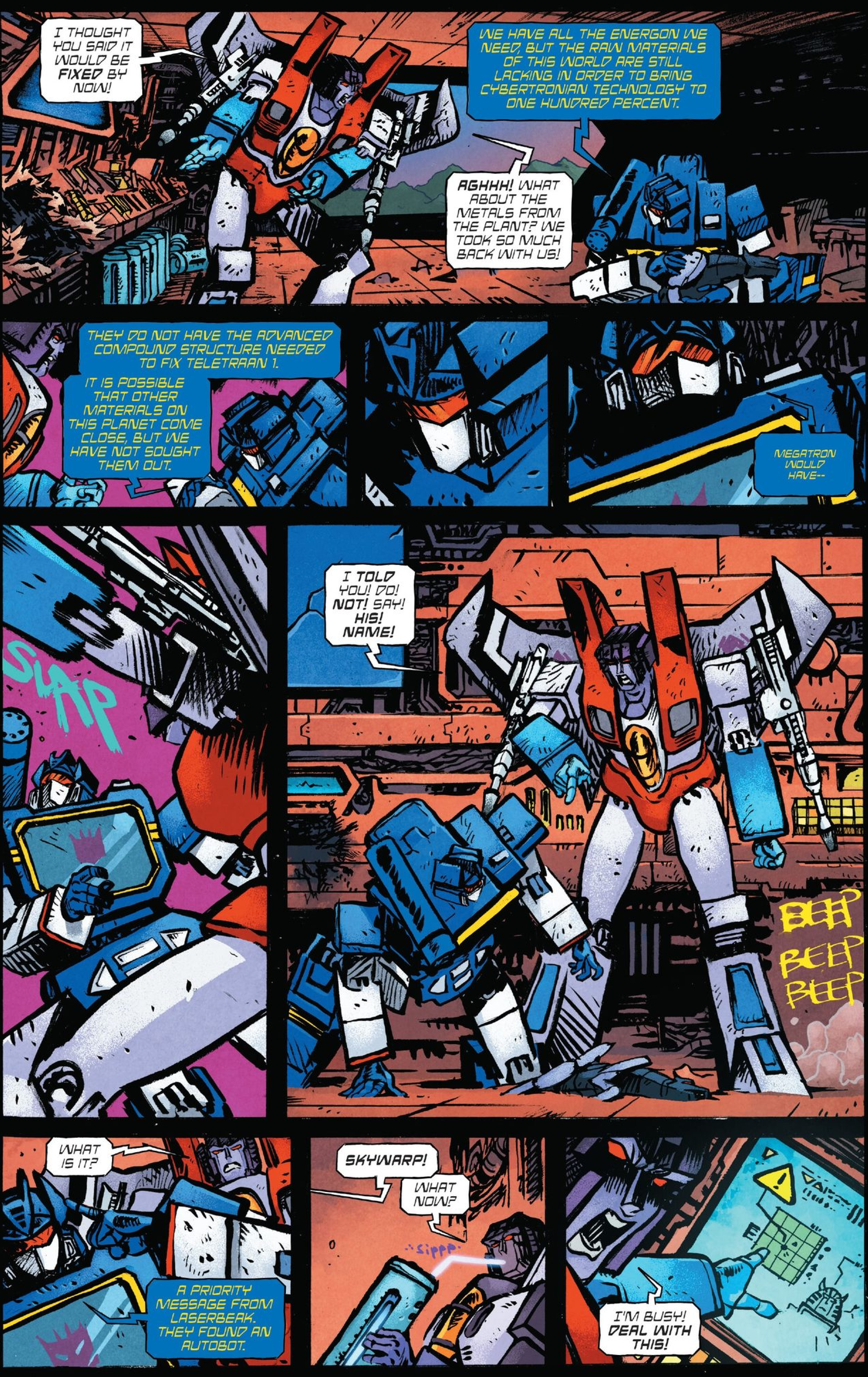
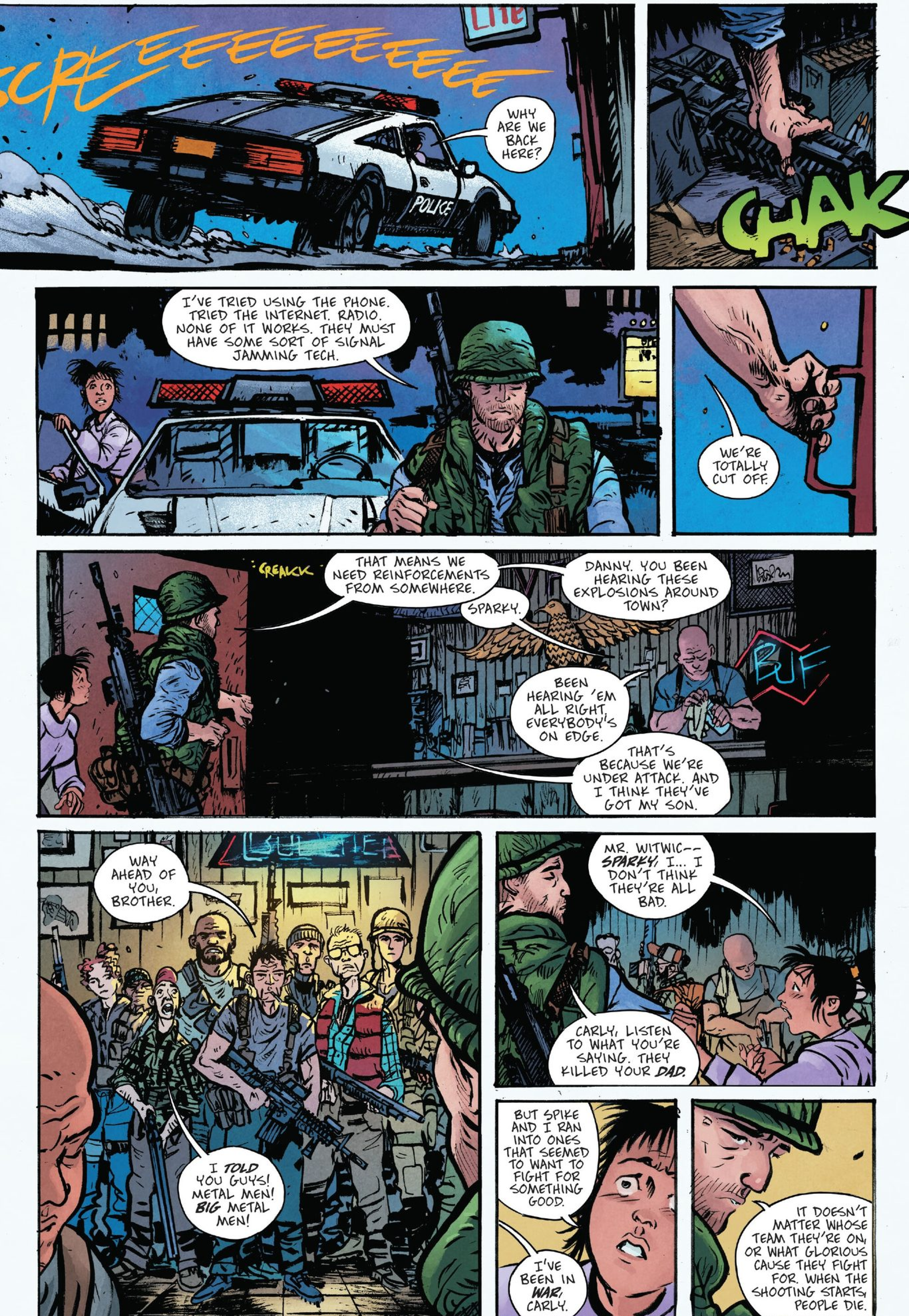

CARLY, PLEASE--
HOW DID HE DIE? WHAT HAPPENED?
AH, KIDDO...
TELL ME EVERYTHING.
HE--I KNOW THIS SOUNDS CRAZY, BUT...HE WAS CRUSHED BY A GIANT... ROBOT.
WHAT?
THERE'S NO OTHER WAY TO PUT IT. IT GRABBED HIM AND JUST--
WHAT DID IT LOOK LIKE?!
I--
WAS IT RED? AND GREY? DID IT TURN INTO A PLANE?
CARLY, WHAT DO YOU KNOW?! WHAT DID YOU SEE?!
I SAW HIM. I SAW HIM WAKE UP AND--
WERE YOU WITH SPIKE? IS MY BOY OKAY?!
HE--
CRASH

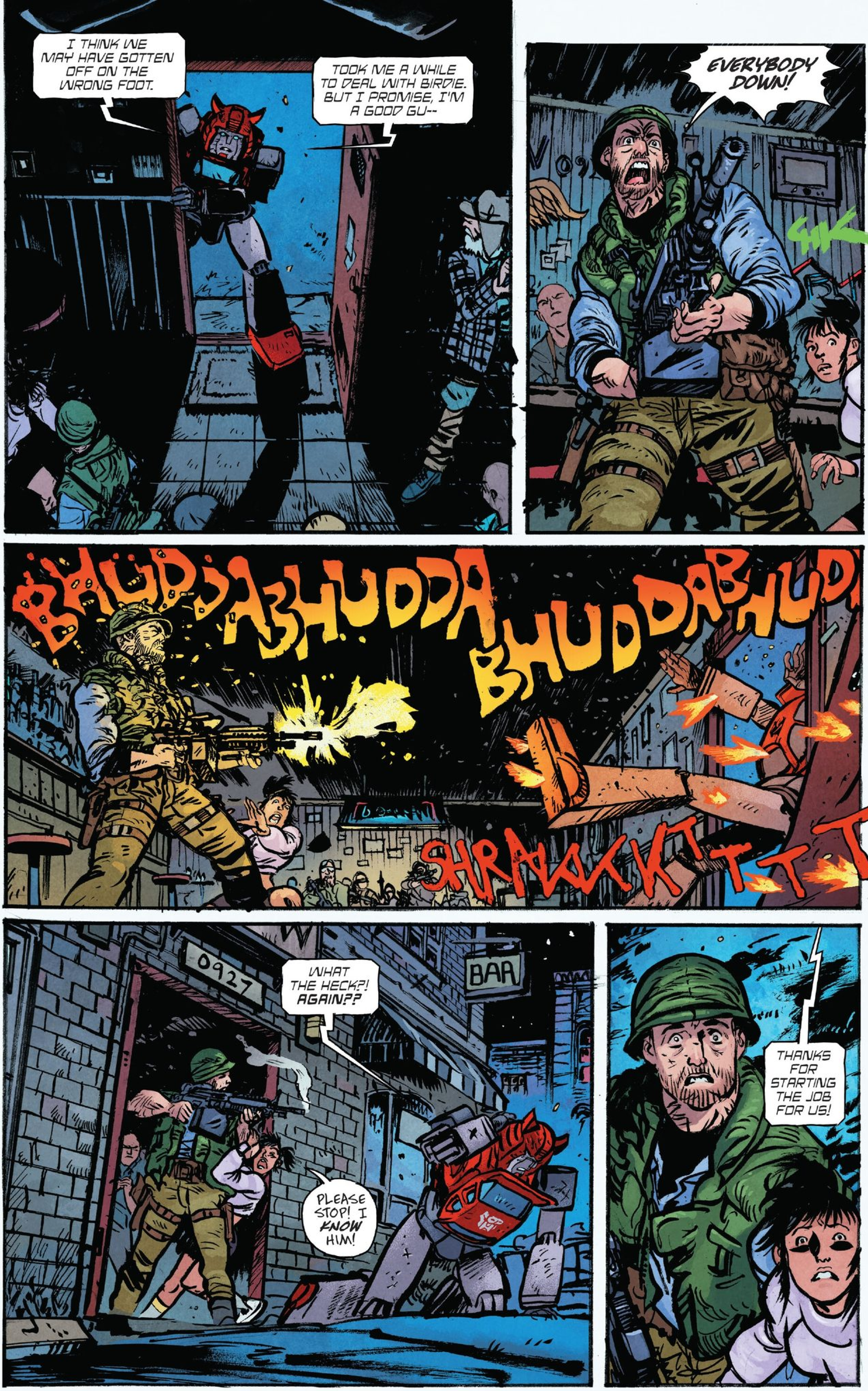

SREEEEEEEEE
BLAM
BLAM
BLAM
GET BEHIND ME!
CHOMP
TOSS
G-GET BACK!
YOU HEARD THE LADY!

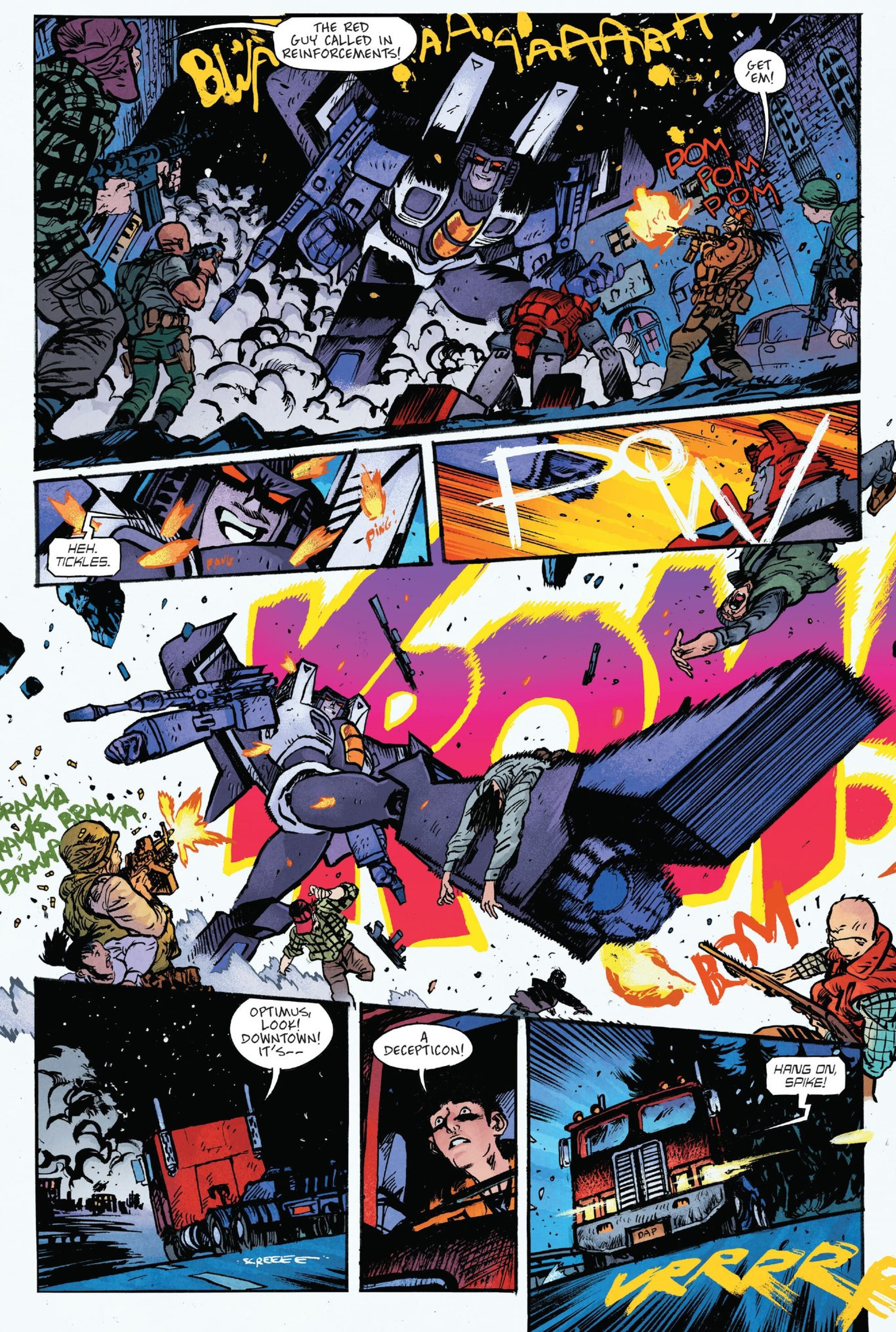

BACK UP, LASER-FREAK!
FWAK
CLIFFJUMPER?
I SAW YOU DRIVING AWAY, AND... I JUST WANTED TO MAKE SURE YOU WERE GOOD. I'M GLAD I DID--
GET AWAY.
UH--

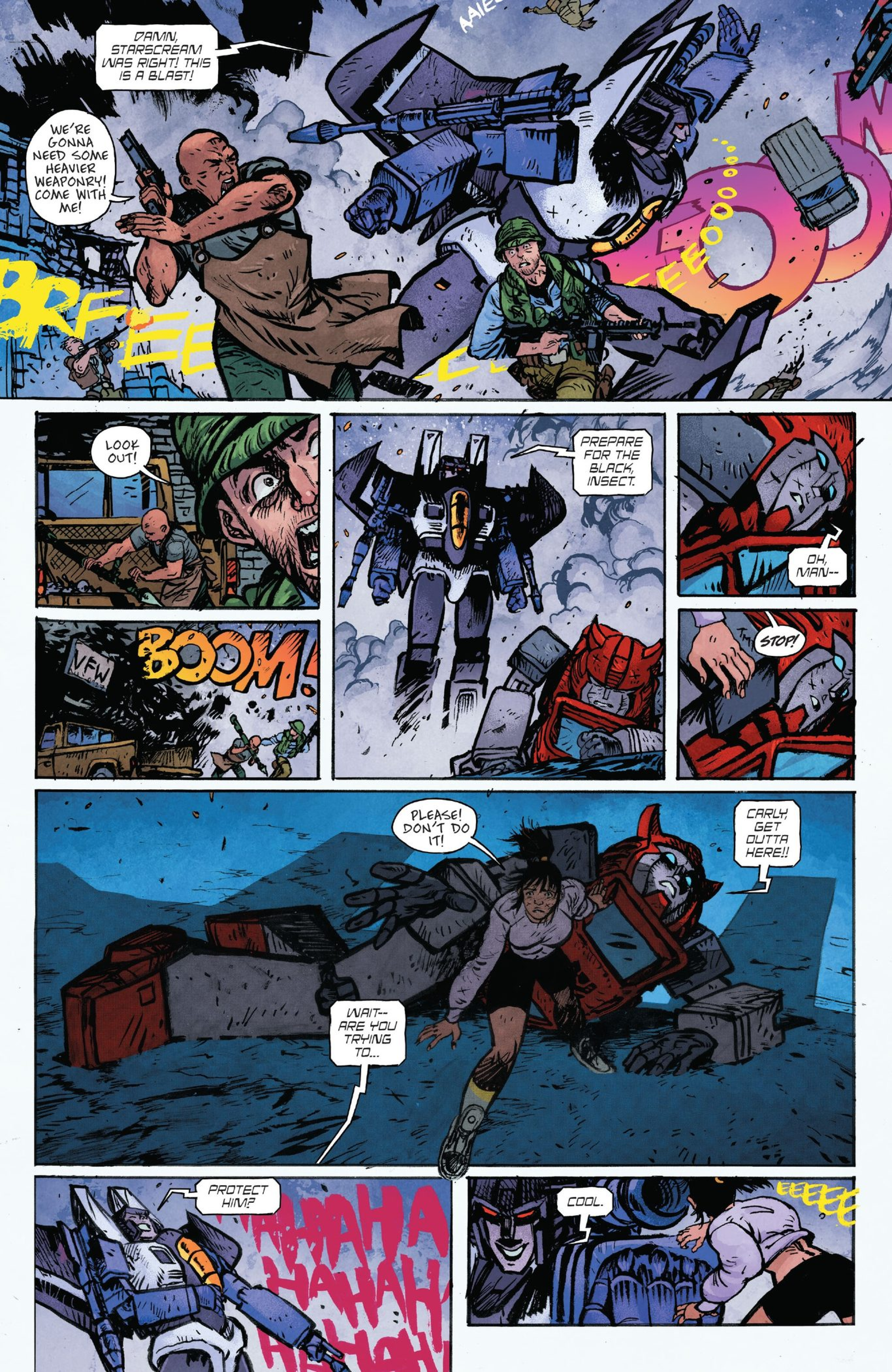

BOOM
MR. WITWICKY, STOP!
SMASH
FWUMP
OW!
I GOT YOU, COME ON!
BUT--
CARLY, LET'S GO!

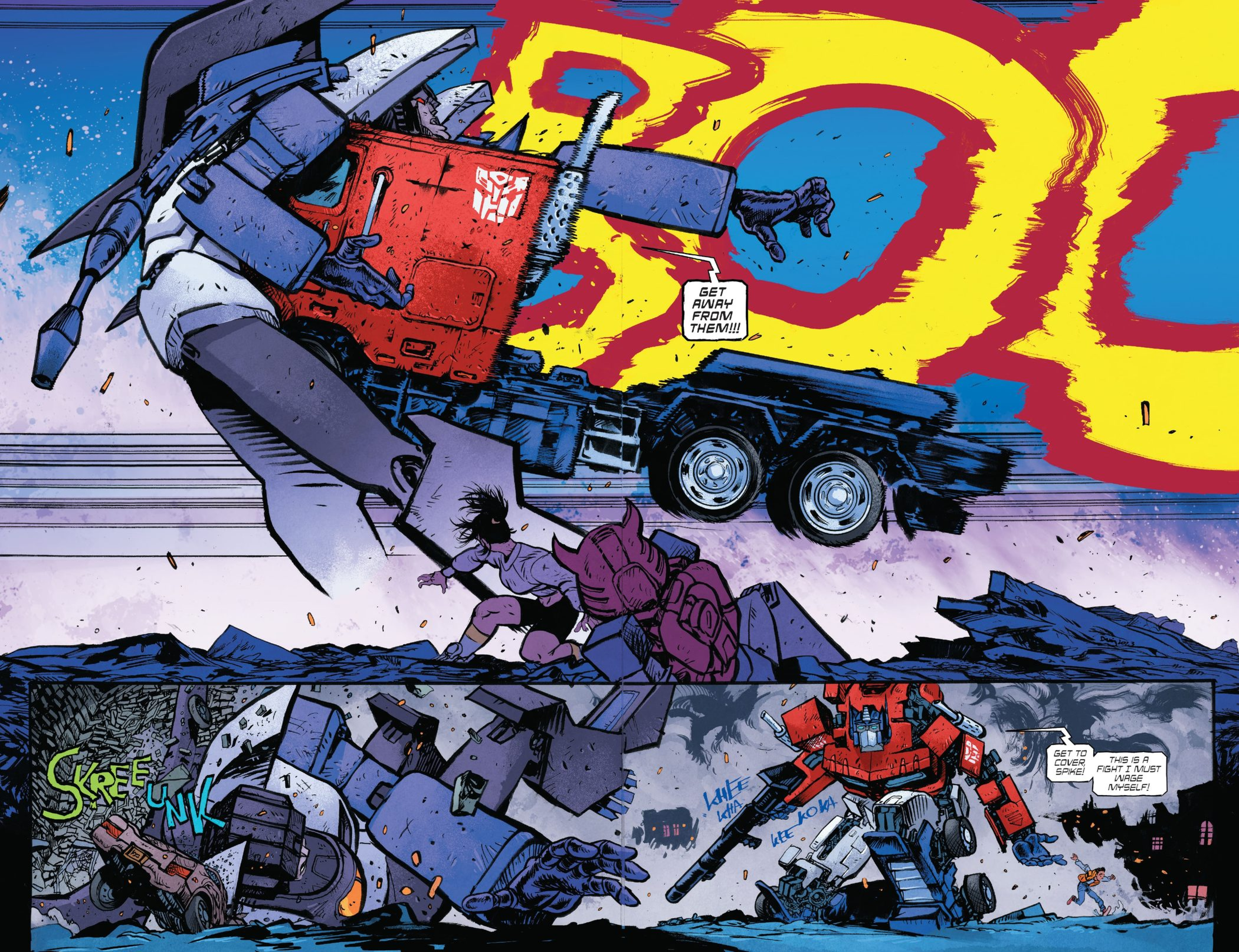

I THOUGHT YOU SAID IT WOULD BE **FIXED** BY NOW!
WE HAVE ALL THE ENERGON WE NEED, BUT THE RAW MATERIALS OF THIS WORLD ARE STILL LACKING IN ORDER TO BRING CYBERTRONIAN TECHNOLOGY TO ONE HUNDRED PERCENT.
AGHHH! WHAT ABOUT THE METALS FROM THE PLANT? WE TOOK SO MUCH BACK WITH US!
THEY DO NOT HAVE THE ADVANCED COMPOUND STRUCTURE NEEDED TO FIX TELETRAAN 1.
IT IS POSSIBLE THAT OTHER MATERIALS ON THIS PLANET COME CLOSE, BUT WE HAVE NOT SOUGHT THEM OUT.
MEGATRON WOULD HAVE--
SLAP
I **TOLD** YOU! **DO! NOT!** SAY! **HIS! NAME!**
BEEP
BEEP
BEEP
WHAT IS IT?
A PRIORITY MESSAGE FROM LASERBEAK. THEY FOUND AN AUTOBOT.
SKYWARP!
WHAT NOW?
sippp
I'M BUSY! **DEAL WITH THIS!**

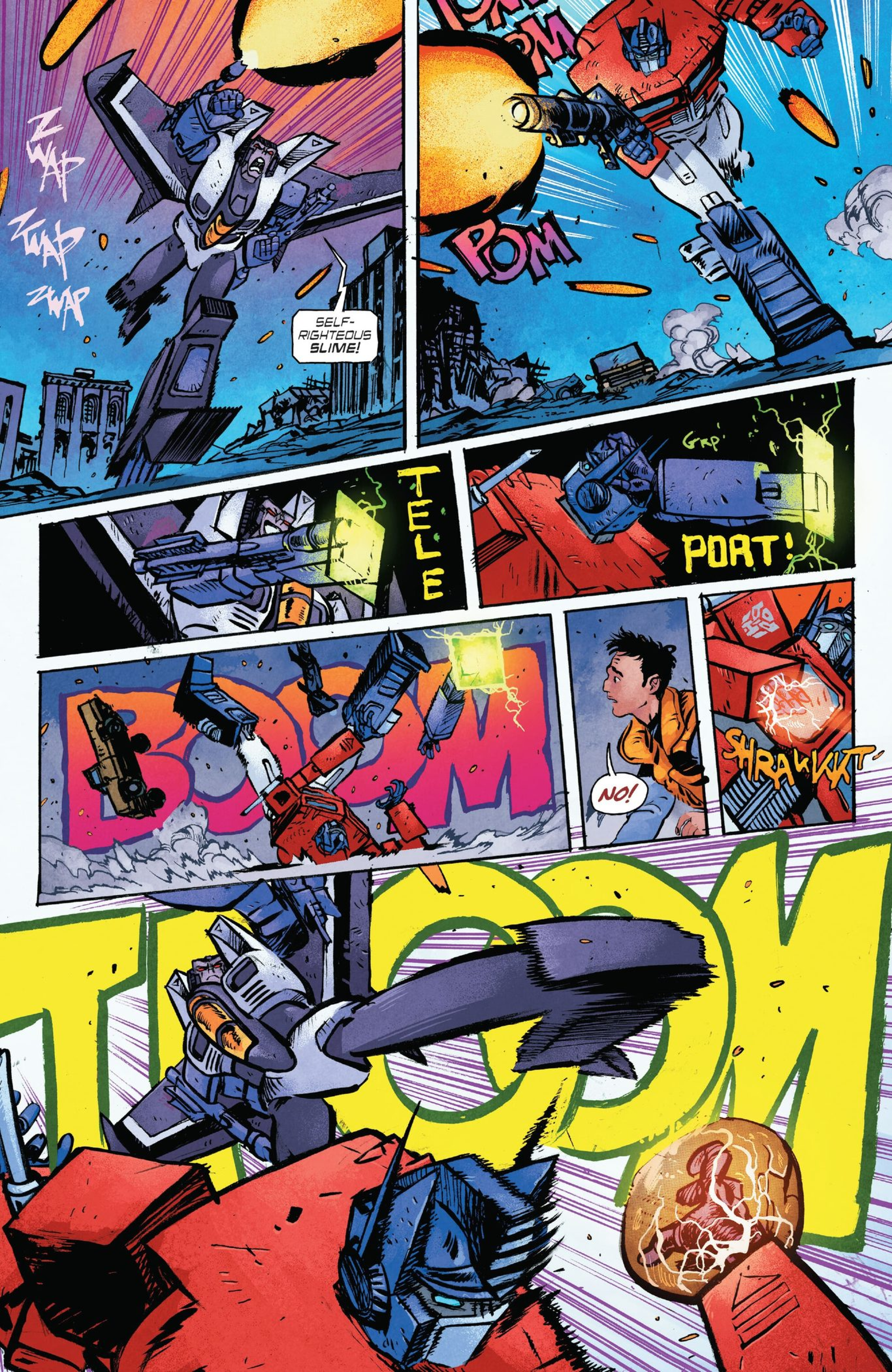

LITE
SCREEEEEEEEEEEEE
WHY ARE WE BACK HERE?
CHAK
I'VE TRIED USING THE PHONE. TRIED THE INTERNET. RADIO. NONE OF IT WORKS. THEY MUST HAVE SOME SORT OF SIGNAL JAMMING TECH.
WE'RE TOTALLY CUT OFF.
CREALCK
THAT MEANS WE NEED REINFORCEMENTS FROM SOMEWHERE.
SPARKY.
DANNY. YOU BEEN HEARING THESE EXPLOSIONS AROUND TOWN?
BUF
BEEN HEARING 'EM ALL RIGHT. EVERYBODY'S ON EDGE.
THAT'S BECAUSE WE'RE UNDER ATTACK. AND I THINK THEY'VE GOT MY SON.
WAY AHEAD OF YOU, BROTHER.
I **TOLD** YOU GUYS! METAL MEN! **BIG** METAL MEN!
MR. WITWIC-- **SPARKY**, I... I DON'T THINK THEY'RE ALL BAD.
CARLY, LISTEN TO WHAT YOU'RE SAYING. THEY KILLED YOUR **DAD**.
BUT SPIKE AND I RAN INTO ONES THAT SEEMED TO WANT TO FIGHT FOR SOMETHING GOOD.
I'VE BEEN IN **WAR**, CARLY.
IT DOESN'T MATTER WHOSE TEAM THEY'RE ON, OR WHAT GLORIOUS CAUSE THEY FIGHT FOR. WHEN THE SHOOTING STARTS, PEOPLE DIE.

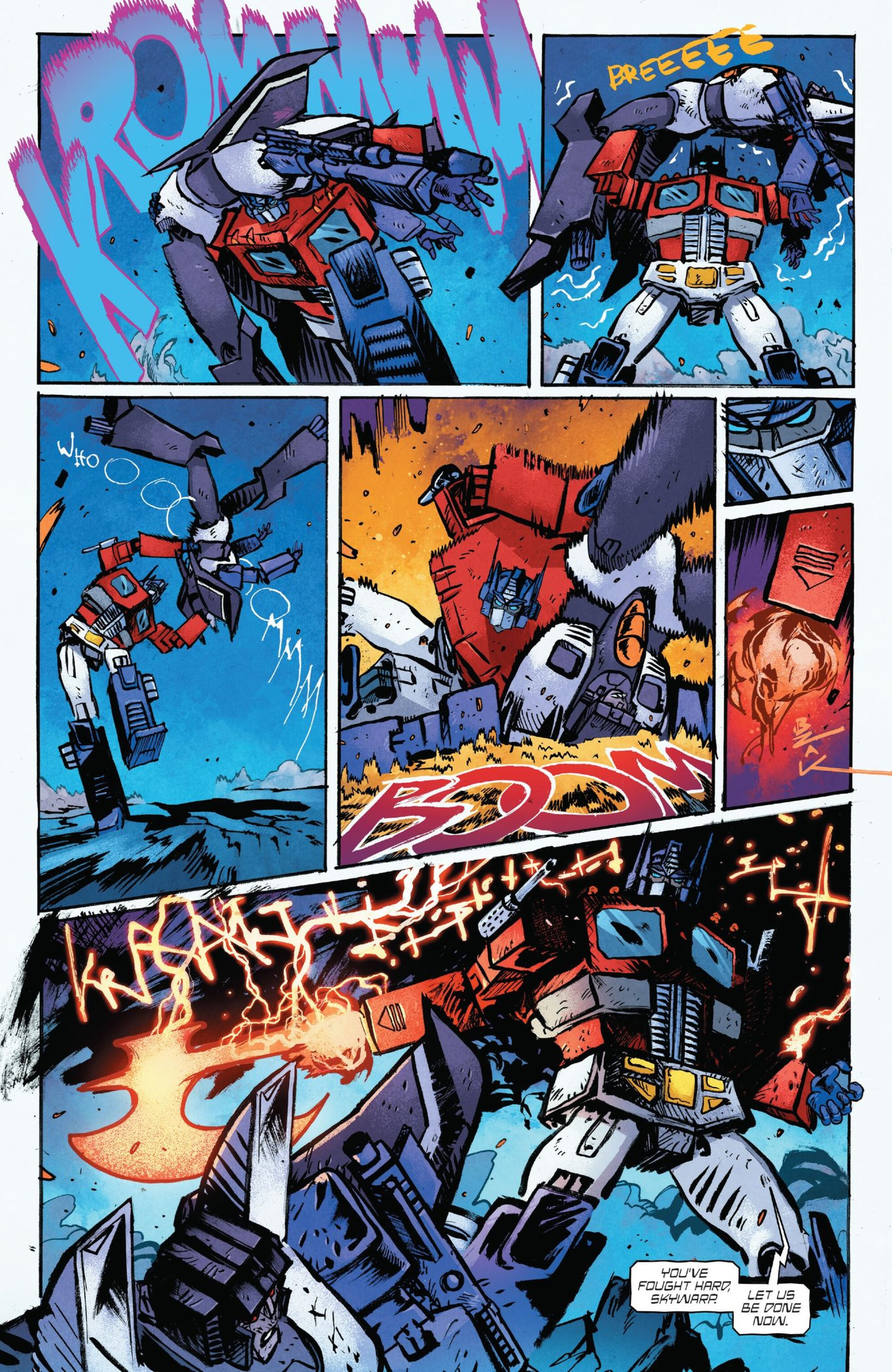

I THINK WE MAY HAVE GOTTEN OFF ON THE WRONG FOOT.
TOOK ME A WHILE TO DEAL WITH BIRDIE. BUT I PROMISE, I'M A GOOD GU--
EVERYBODY DOWN!
SHK
BHUDDABHUDDA BHUDDABHUD
SHRAKKKT T T T
0927
BAR
WHAT THE HECK?! AGAIN??
PLEASE STOP! I KNOW HIM!
THANKS FOR STARTING THE JOB FOR US!

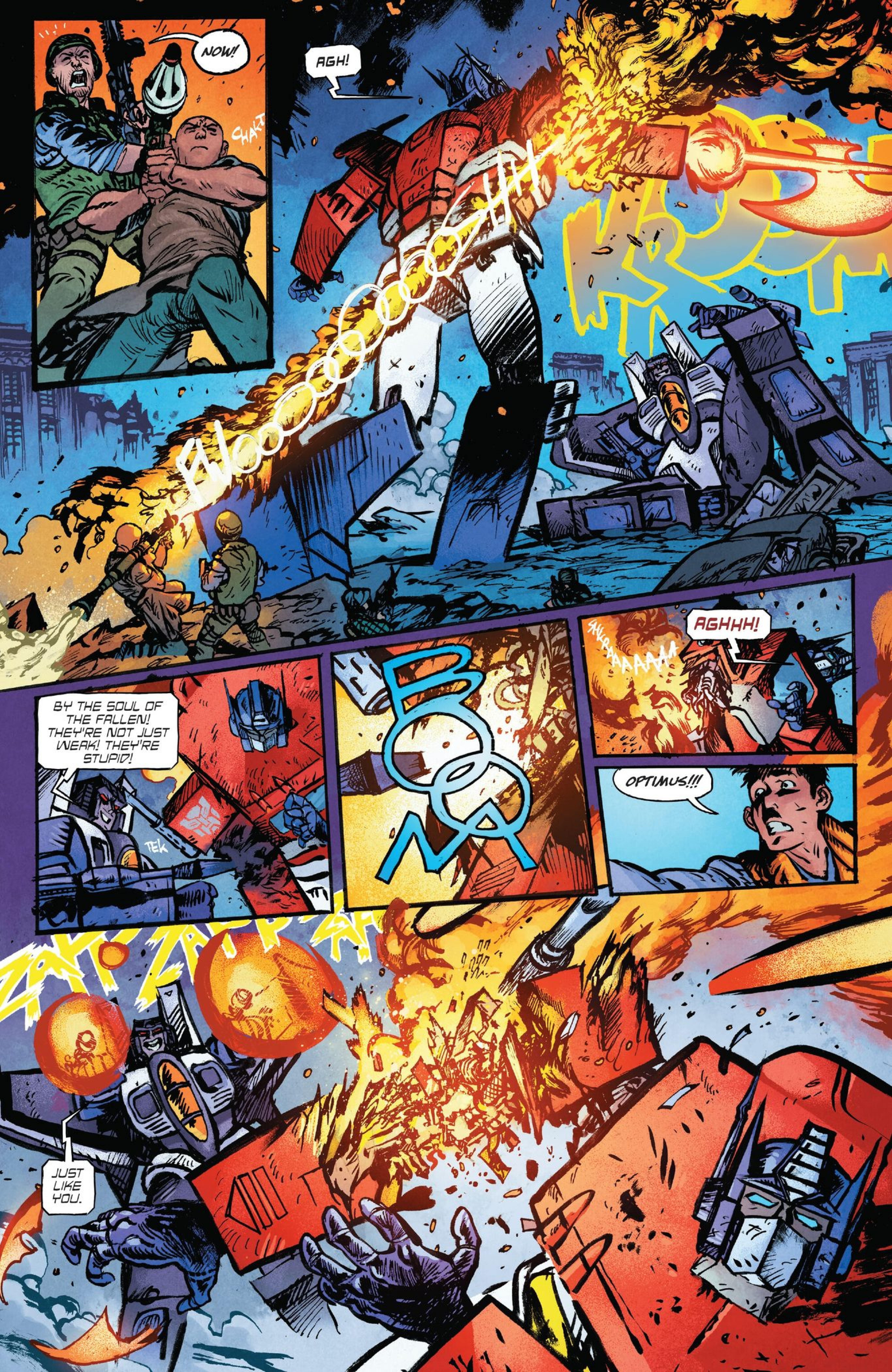

BWAAAAAAAAAAH
THE RED GUY CALLED IN REINFORCEMENTS!
GET 'EM!
POM POM POM
HEH. TICKLES.
PANG
PING!
POW
BRAKKA BRAKKA BRAKKA BRAKKA
BOOM
OPTIMUS, LOOK! DOWNTOWN! IT'S--
SKREEEE
A DECEPTICON!
HANG ON, SPIKE!
DAP
VRRRR

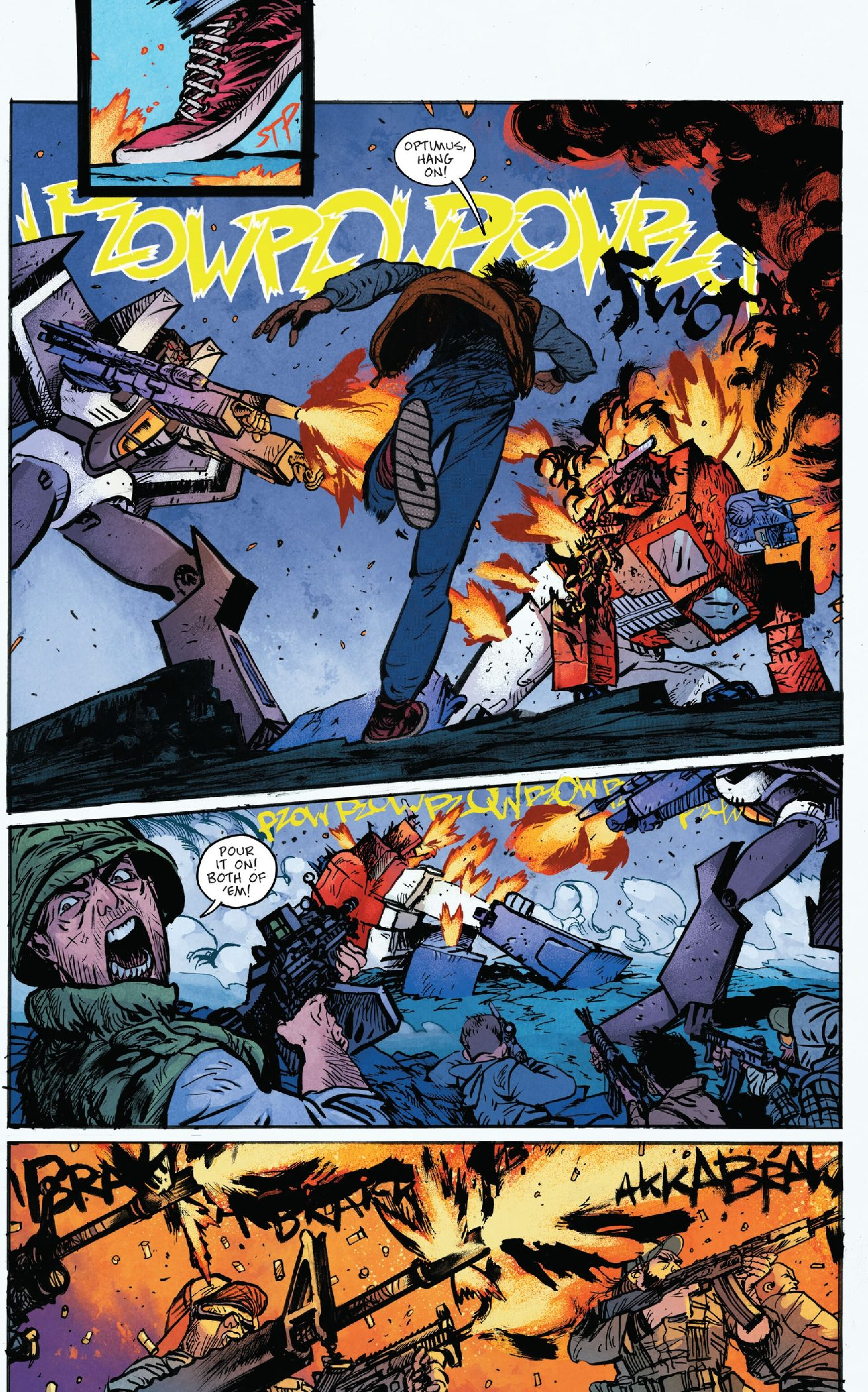

AAIEE
DAMN, STARSCREAM WAS RIGHT! THIS IS A BLAST!
WE'RE GONNA NEED SOME HEAVIER WEAPONRY! COME WITH ME!
BRFEEE
EEEEOOOO
LOOK OUT!
PREPARE FOR THE BLACK, INSECT.
OH, MAN--
VFW
BOOM!
STOP!
PLEASE! DON'T DO IT!
CARLY, GET OUTTA HERE!!
WAIT-- ARE YOU TRYING TO...
PROTECT HIM?
HAHAHA HAHAHAH HAHAH!
COOL.
EEEEE

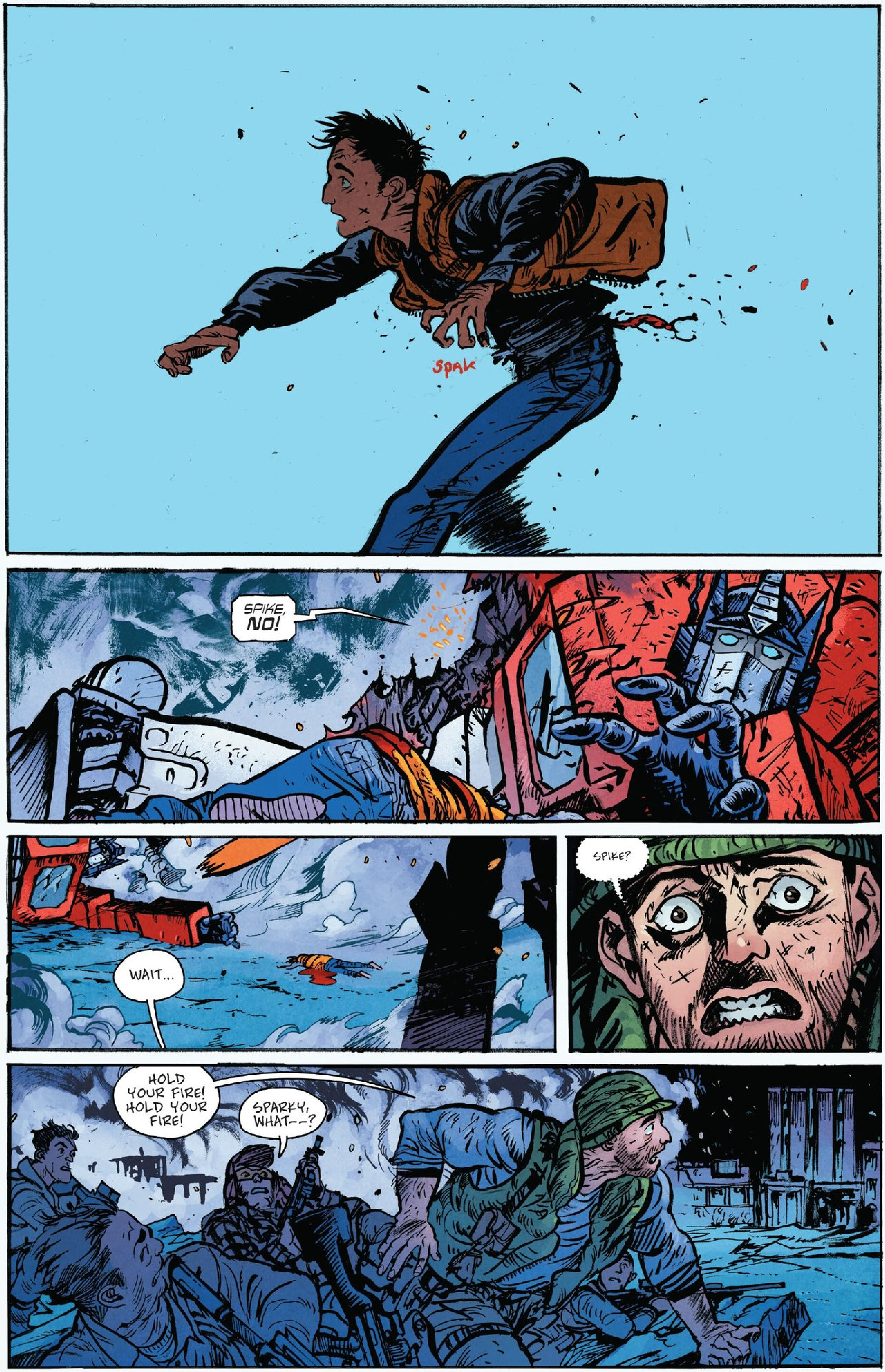

BOO
GET AWAY FROM THEM!!!
SKREEUNK
KHEE KHA
KEE KOKA
GET TO COVER, SPIKE!
THIS IS A FIGHT I MUST WAGE MYSELF!

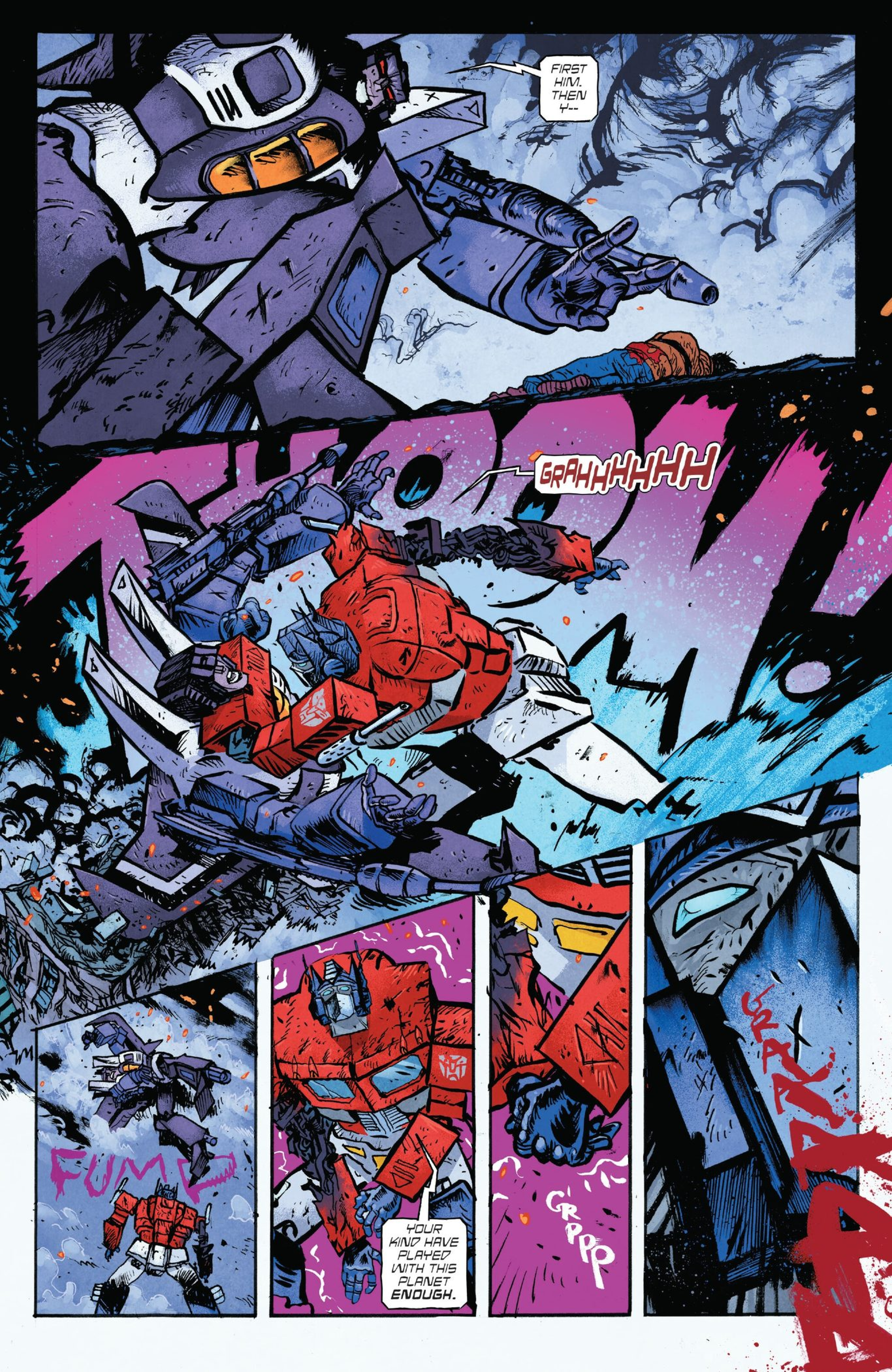

ZWAP
ZWAP
ZWAP
SELF-RIGHTEOUS SLIME!
POM
TELE
Grp
PORT!
BOOM
NO!
SHRAKKKT
TOOM

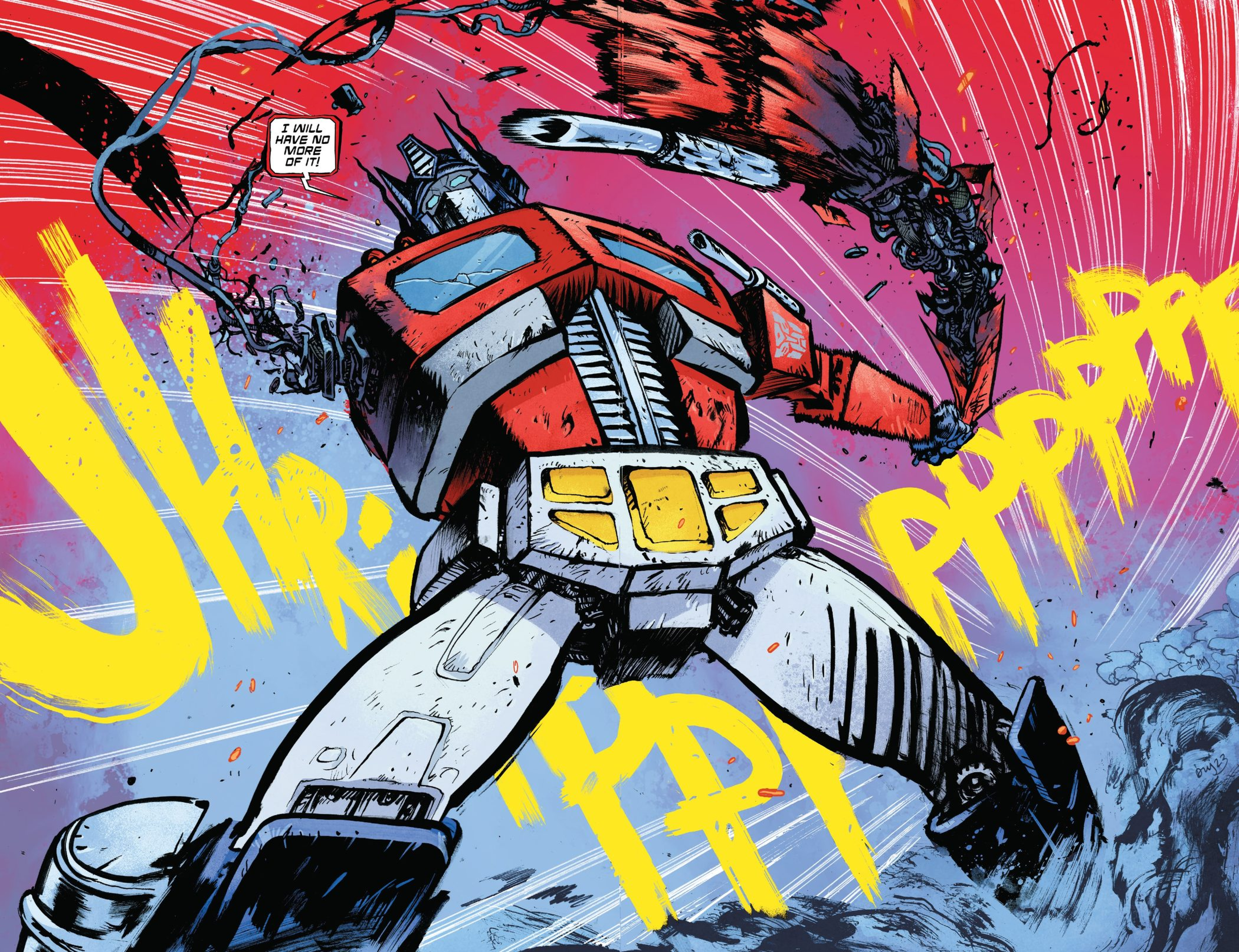

KROOMMMM
BREEEEE
WHOOOOOMMM
BOOM
BLAK
KRAKTHTHTHTH
YOU'VE FOUGHT HARD, SKYWARP.
LET US BE DONE NOW.

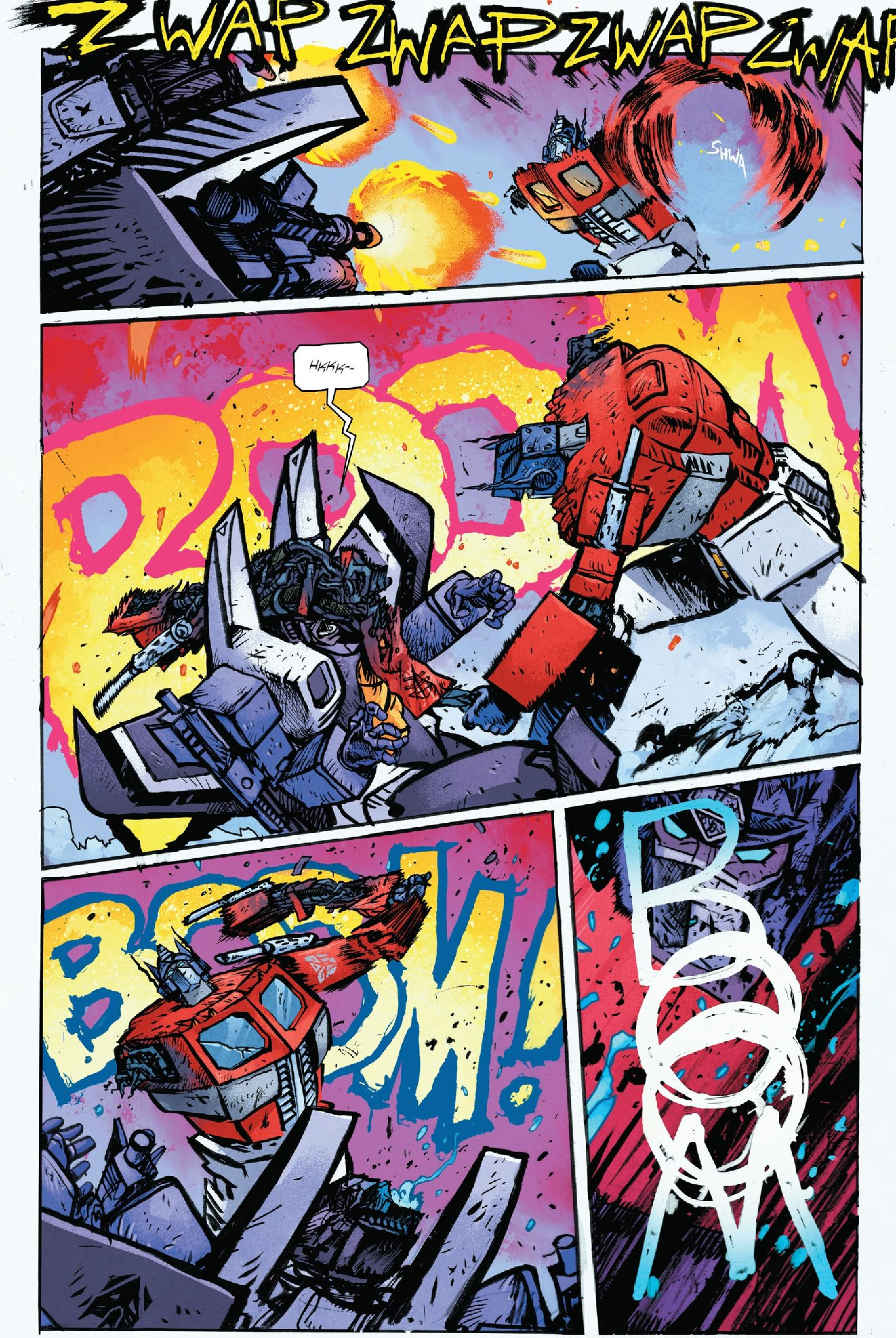

NOW!
CHAKT
AGH!
FWOOOOOOOOOOSHH
KROOM
BY THE SOUL OF THE FALLEN! THEY'RE NOT JUST WEAK! THEY'RE STUPID!
TEK
BOOM
SHRAAAAAAM
AGHHH!
OPTIMUS!!!
ZAP ZAP ZAP
JUST LIKE YOU.

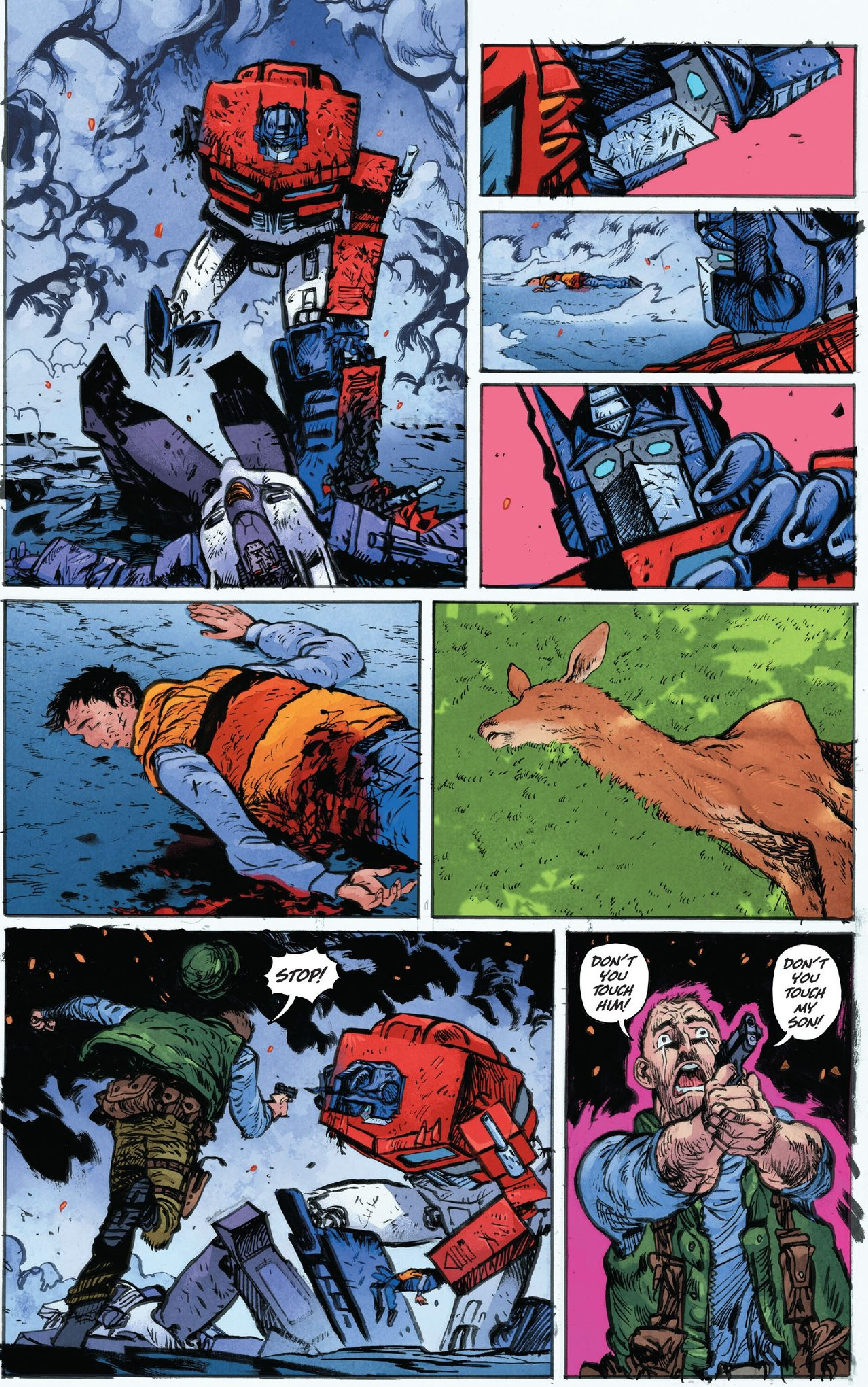

STP
OPTIMUS, HANG ON!
PZOWPZOWPZOWPZO
FZOW
PZOW PZOW PZOW PZOW PZOW
POUR IT ON! BOTH OF 'EM!
BRAK
BRAKK
AKKABRAK

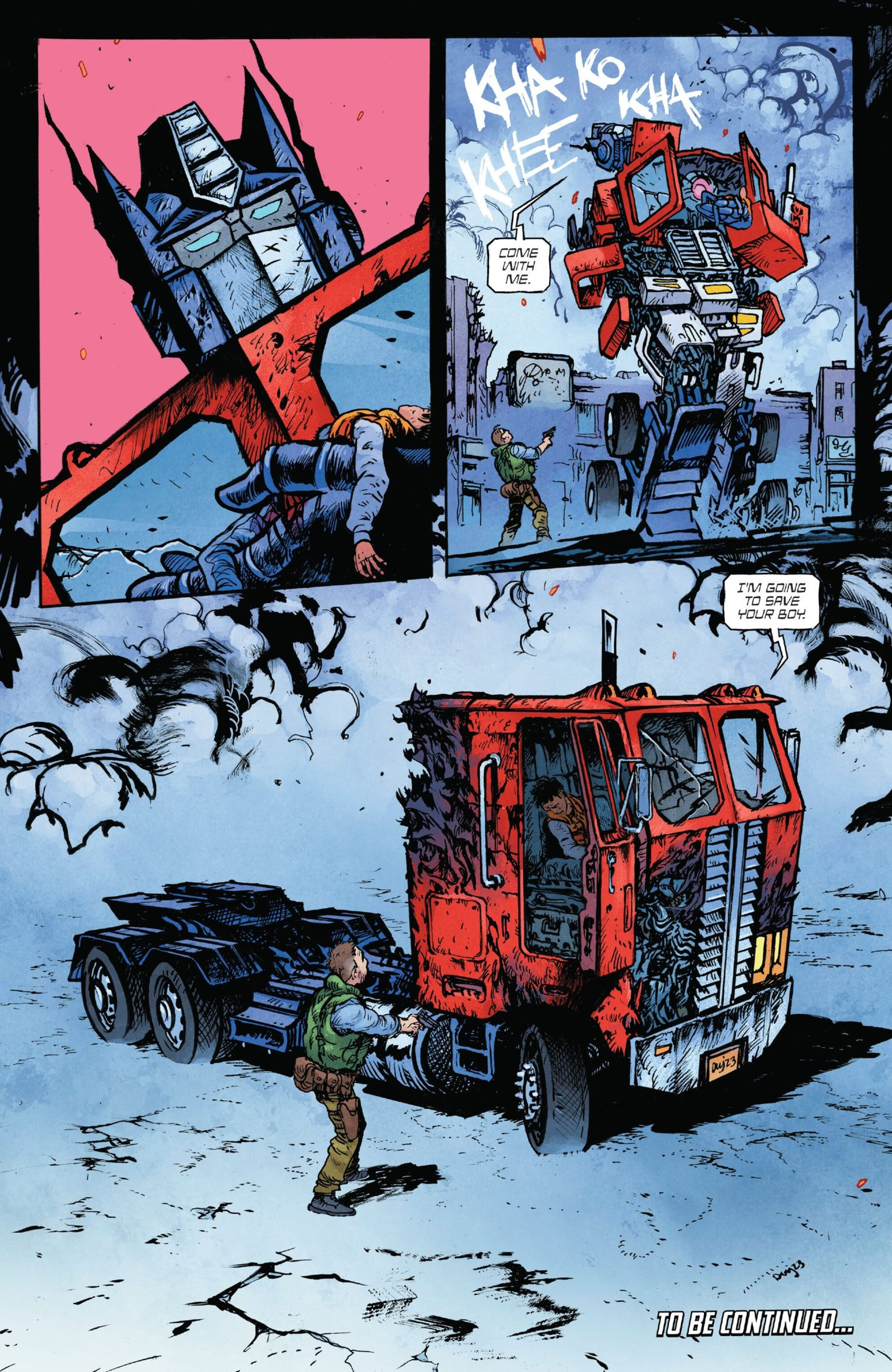

SPAK
SPIKE, NO!
WAIT...
SPIKE?
HOLD YOUR FIRE! HOLD YOUR FIRE!
SPARKY, WHAT--?


FIRST HIM. THEN Y--
GRAHHHHHH
THOOM!
FUMP
YOUR KIND HAVE PLAYED WITH THIS PLANET ENOUGH.
GRPPP
GRAAA


I WILL HAVE NO MORE OF IT!
JHRPPPPPPP


ZWAP ZWAP ZWAP ZWA
SHWA
HKKK--
BOOM
BOOM!
BOOM


STOP!
DON'T YOU TOUCH HIM!
DON'T YOU TOUCH MY SON!


KHA KO KHA
KHEE
COME WITH ME.
I'M GOING TO SAVE YOUR BOY.
TO BE CONTINUED...

SEND LETTERS TO TRANSFORMERS@SKYBOUND.COM

Hey, gang! Welcome back to the Transformers letters column. This is Jonathan. Man, you thought the Optimus clothesline/suplex combo ruled? How about Optimus bashing Skywarp with his own severed freaking arm?! Can things get crazier?! Yes, they can. They will.

Hey, this is Dan. Truly, I wish there was more to say, but the pages you just read really did the job for me. That sequence was insanely fun to draw! Let's get to some letters!

PS: Stick around after the letters column for a sneak preview of COBRA COMMANDER #1! The Energon Universe expands!

* * *

Hello, Transformers Team!

I've been a fan of the Transformers since watching the Robots in Disguise cartoon from 2001. I read both IDW continuities, so naturally, I was excited to hear a new series was going to be published from Skybound.

And I gotta say, I love what I've seen in Issue 1! While we do a familiar set-up similar to the classic cartoon, we naturally got that Daniel Warren Johnson gut punch from stuff like Do A Powerbomb! I definitely wasn't expecting Bumblebee and Jetfire to get killed (especially because Jetfire's always been one of my favs.)

Daniel, you truly are a master of the gut punch. I've probably said "gut punch" in every other email. This series just hurts so good.

I also think it's a great touch having Spike sympathize with Optimus by seeing him mourn the loss of Bumblebee, no doubt reminding him of the pain he's still feeling from Jimmy's death. It's great characterization realized by the artwork.

There's also a fun little question about why we haven't seen Megatron yet. I'm looking forward to seeing how this will play out in future issues. Especially because I'm curious to see if you guys are gonna stick to the G1 cast, or if you're going to pull some obscure characters like Deathsaurus or Team Bullet Train.

You're asking all the right questions, Kevan! Gotta keep reading to find out!

All in all, it seems like we're in for a good time for this latest comic outing from the Robots in Disguise.

Sincerely,

Kevan Lago

Thanks for your kind words, Kevan! Maybe we can find some room for PREDAKING? Who knows!

* * *

I've been a transformers fan since I was a small child in the mid 90s, introduced to it by my mom was a comic and cartoonhead. Over the years as I've grown and had kids of my own, Transformers has become something very important to me, and I constantly find myself digging through every old and out of print comic I can find. Thematically the ongoing struggle endemic to TF stories feels timeless and relatable at any stage of life.

Despite this, Transformers is something that's a bit hard to share with others due to how complicated it can be, which brings me to Daniel Warren Johnson's issue #1. I had never read a DWJ comic before, but now I'm sure I'll be hunting them down, because he clearly understands the heart of it all and managed to pack in the action and emotion necessary to round out a good Transformers story in such a small amount of pagetime. I can tell this run is going to be something special and comes from a place of passion, and it means a lot to me to see that love poured into this project. Excited to see where the story goes and hope you'll all include some more overlooked characters as it goes on (if you bring in someone like King Atlas or Geosensus I'll love you guys forever).

Thank you for the kind words, Lex! We hope this should be the perfect entry point for anyone interested in Transformers, and definitely for anyone who's new to the franchise! Not only is this a great Transformers

comic, it's just an awesome COMIC. And we're excited to see fans of Daniel and Mike's work be introduced to this timeless world, and for fans of Transformers to go explore Daniel and Mike's superb catalogue!

Regards, Lex

Comics can be very hard to make, Lex, so I try to pick projects that will keep me inspired and hungry to continue to get better at this craft. TRANSFORMERS came along at the perfect time, where I needed a change of pace from my creator owned work. It's great to be here.

Hello!

Firstly, I'd like to say that the first issue of the comic does a great job at setting the tone and establishing (what I believe to be) the core characters. Can't wait to read more!

Secondly, my favorite moment was definitely Optimus mourning over Bumblebee's corpse with Spike looking on with sympathy. And then, without hesitation, helps Optimus by pushing his ion blaster towards the pinned autobot. Cybertronian/human interactions and relationships are something that I'm always happy to see. To paraphrase something Bob Budiansky once said, what's the point of the transformers fighting on earth if they aren't going to interact with humans? I think there's a lot of untapped potential for human/cybertronian stories and I'm glad that your tapping into that. I'm looking forward to see what happens next!
From, Cooper Klebba

So happy you enjoyed issue #1, Cooper! And glad that Cybertronian-human dynamic is shining through. The "human" element of Optimus Prime especially is so crucial to the emotional weight of these characters. And hey, if anyone can make us care about the emotional wellbeing of an 18-wheeler, it's Daniel!

Damn right!

Dear Transformers Team,

Who knew I needed Optimus Prime clotheslining Starscream in my life? Daniel Warren Johnson, apparently. Then to follow that up with a suplex and a super kick to the back for good measure? Johnson's mission statement for the Energon Universe is loud and clear: It's No Holds Barred and I am here for it! Spike and Carly pushing with their whole bodies to get Optimus his blaster was another small, but awesome touch. Digging this initial line up of bots, as well (Skywarp, yes!). Looking forward to seeing where the story goes from here.

Christmas truly came early this year with that clothesline/suplex combo.

One of these days Jetfire will live up to his potential... or maybe just live at all.

One day… one day…

Brian Thomer

Glad to see we both love Skywarp, Brian! I have PLANS for this guy!

Thanks for writing in, folks! Bet you can't guess what Optimus does in issue #4! Until then, make sure you pick up DUKE #1 this month (December 27th!) to see where our favorite grunt wound up after TRANSFORMERS #2. And to tide you over til then, go check out the COBRA COMMANDER #1 preview. It's right over there, just flip the next page!

-Jonathan

I recently got to read DUKE #1! Josh is writing the crap out of it, and Tom is doing something special with his lines in this book. Please check it out! I recently got back from NYCC, and it was awesome to see so many people in person who dug TF #1. You're all the best. I'm going to get going and keep plugging away at the art on issue 4! (I took a 5 minute break to write to you here) Blessings to everyone during the holiday season!

-DWJ

THE COBRA THREAT BEGINS HERE
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COBRA COMMANDER

Red-hot writer **JOSHUA WILLIAMSON** (*Superman, DUKE*) and **ANDREA MILANA** (*Impact Winter: Rook*) introduce the best, and worst, humanity has to offer. **COBRA COMMANDER** Enters the Energon Universe **JANUARY 2024** !

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WELCOME TO THE ENERGON UNIVERSE

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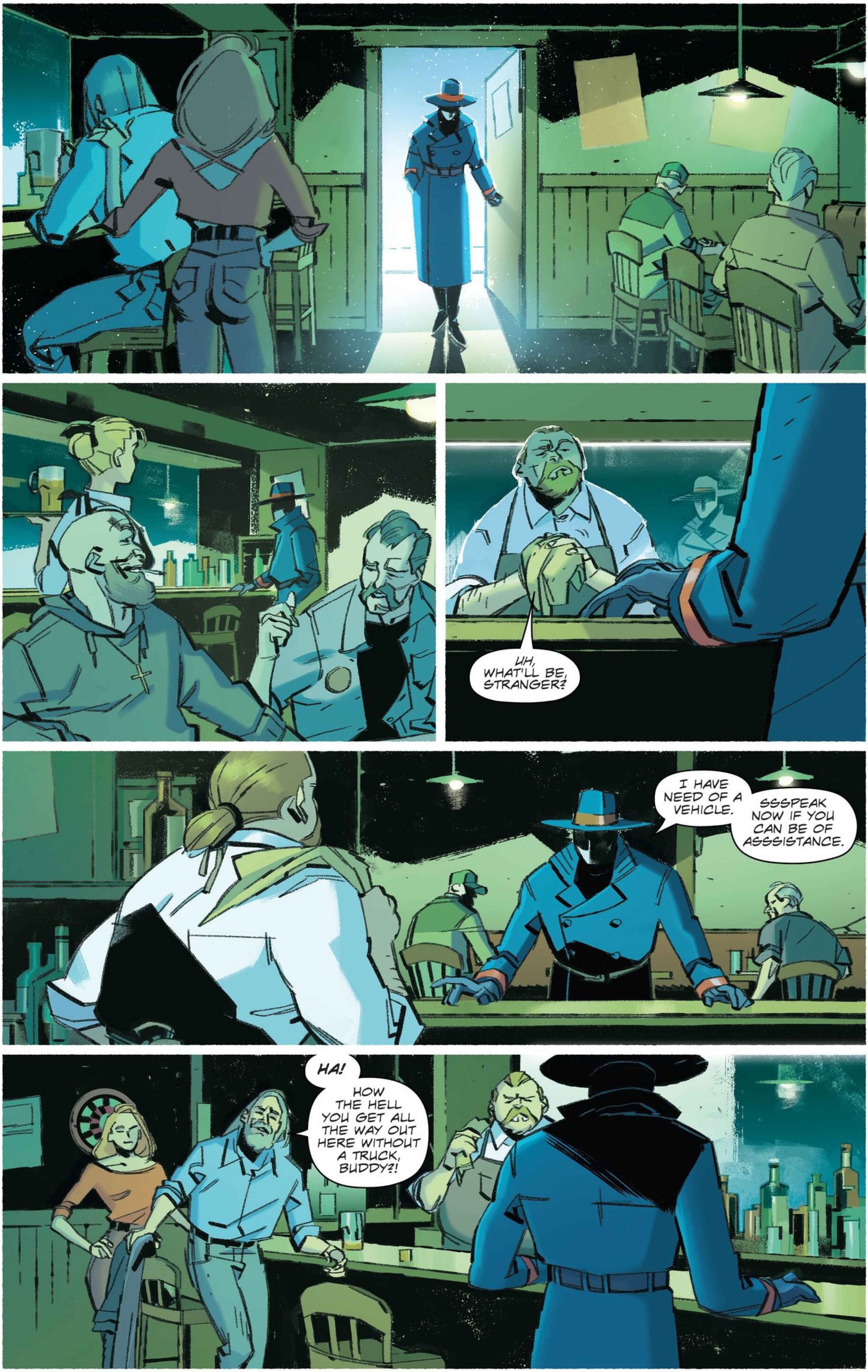
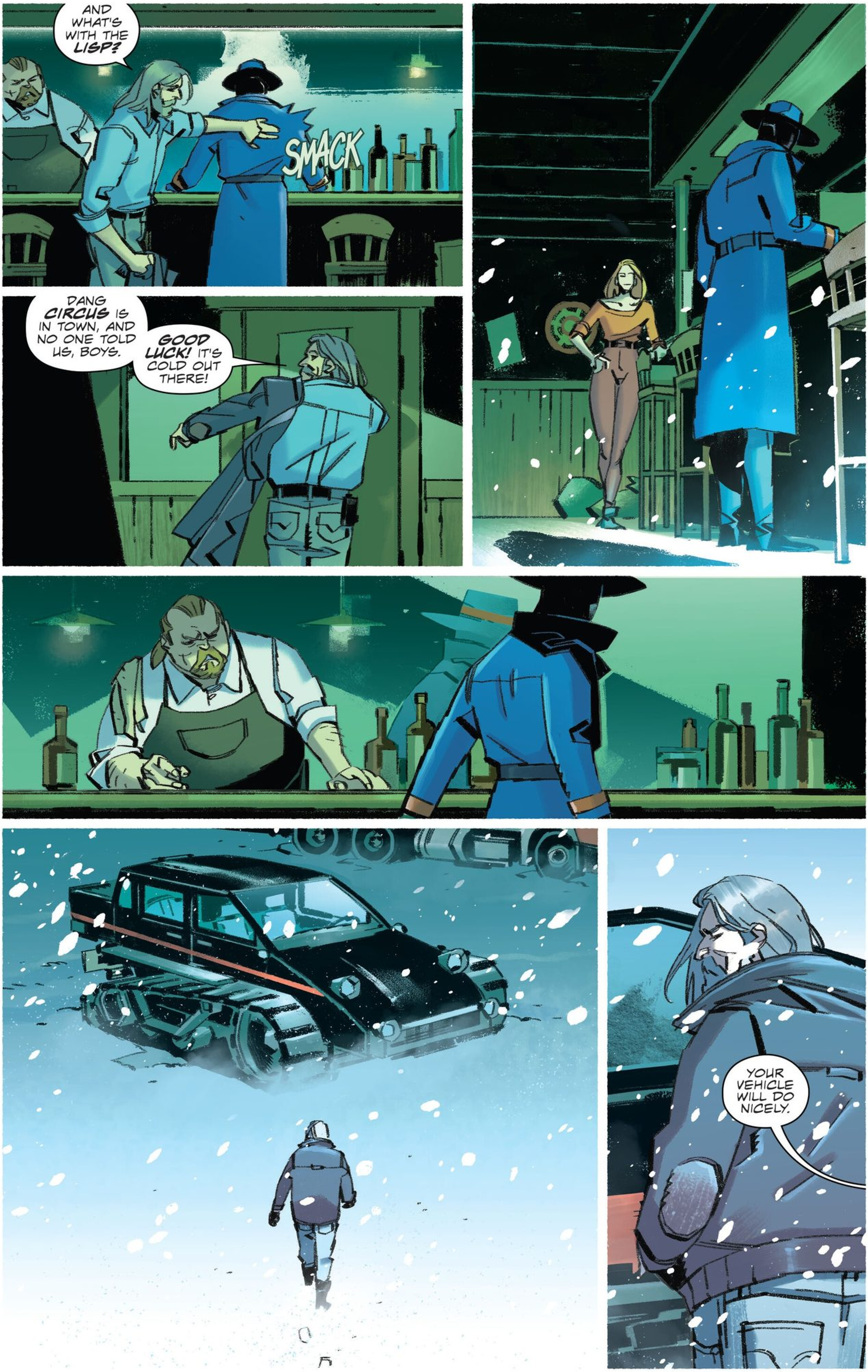
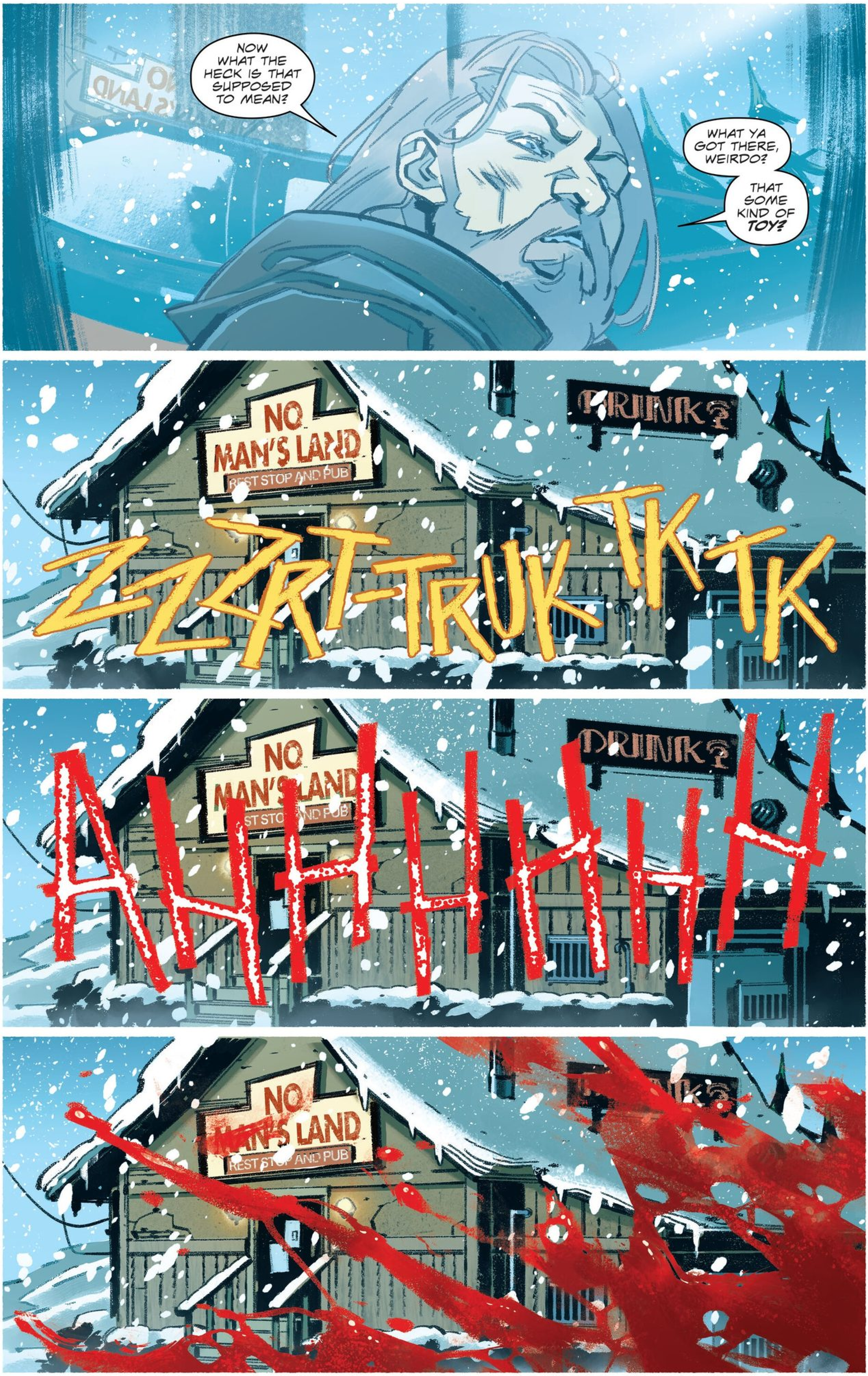
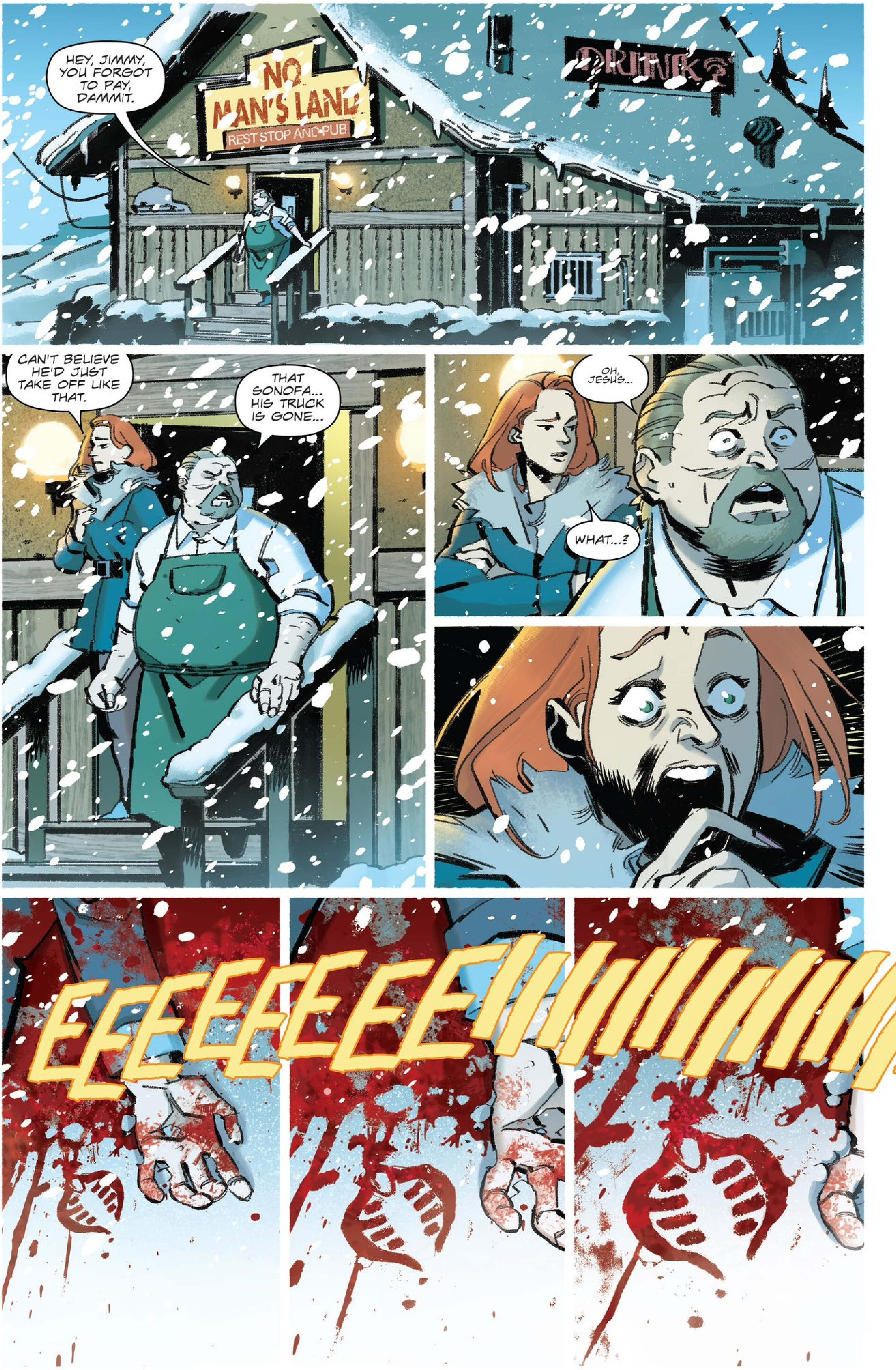

UH, WHAT'LL BE, STRANGER?
I HAVE NEED OF A VEHICLE.
SSSPEAK NOW IF YOU CAN BE OF ASSSISTANCE.
HA!
HOW THE HELL YOU GET ALL THE WAY OUT HERE WITHOUT A TRUCK, BUDDY?!


AND WHAT'S WITH THE *LISP?*
SMACK
DANG *CIRCUS* IS IN TOWN, AND NO ONE TOLD US, BOYS.
GOOD LUCK! IT'S COLD OUT THERE!
YOUR VEHICLE WILL DO NICELY.


NOW WHAT THE HECK IS THAT SUPPOSED TO MEAN?
WHAT YA GOT THERE, WEIRDO?
THAT SOME KIND OF *TOY?*
NO MAN'S LAND
REST STOP AND PUB
DRINK?
Z-ZZRT-TRUK TK TK
AHHHHHHH


NO MAN'S LAND
REST STOP AND PUB
DRINK
HEY, JIMMY, YOU FORGOT TO PAY, DAMMIT.
CAN'T BELIEVE HE'D JUST TAKE OFF LIKE THAT.
THAT SONOFA... HIS TRUCK IS GONE...
OH, JESUS...
WHAT...?
EEEEEEEEIIIIIIIIIIII!

RATED **T** / TEEN